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The President's Daily Brief

April 15, 1976

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~~*Top Secret*~~ 25X1

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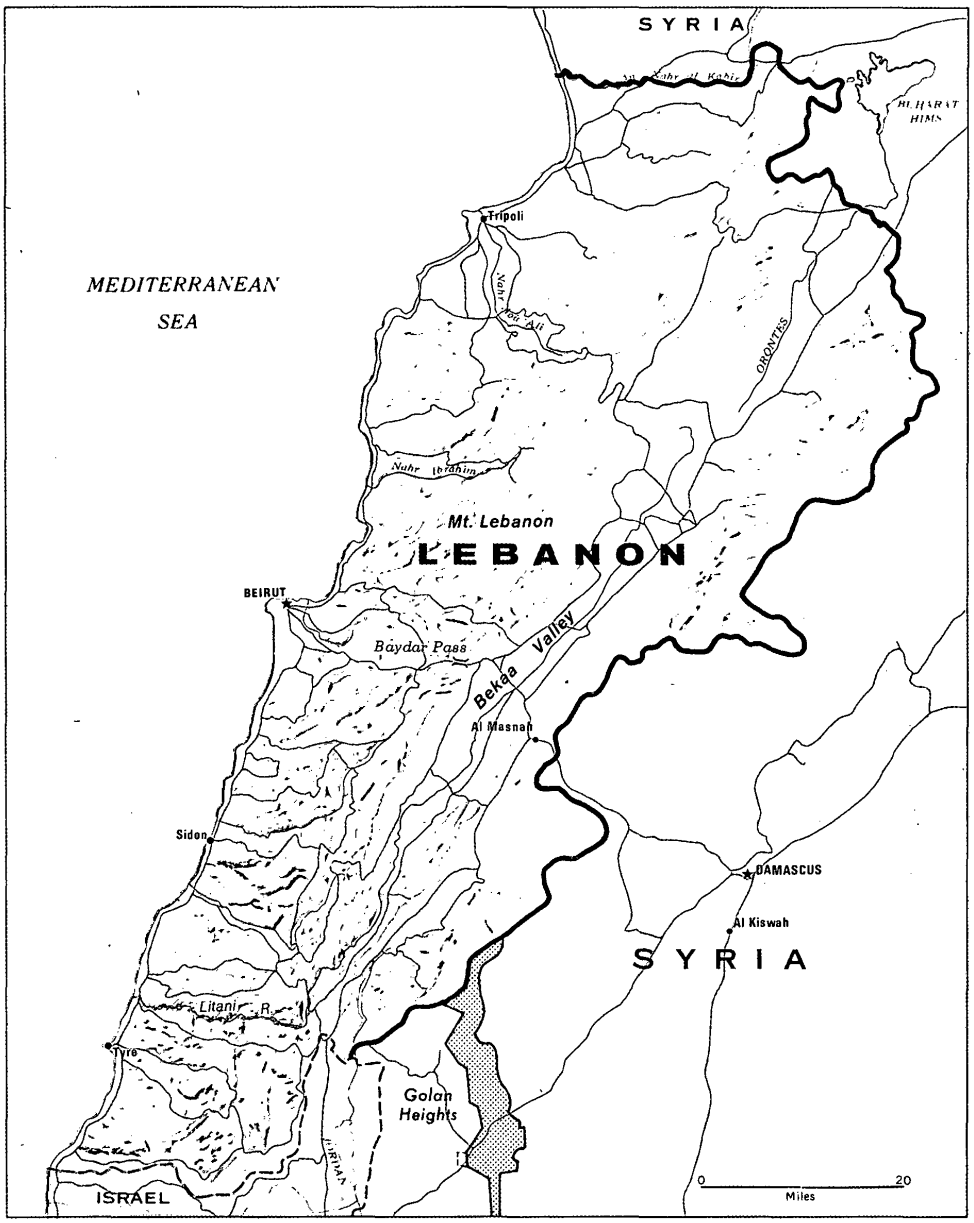

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LEBANON: 25X1

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Top Israeli leaders remain cautious in their public reactions to developments in Lebanon and their treatment of the possibility of Israeli military intervention. As Prime Minister Rabin did in his interview reported in this morning's Washington Post, they have all stressed that Israel will act only if it believes its security is directly threatened. 25X1

Defense Minister Peres has publicly cautioned that Israel must consider whether intervention would simply unite the Arabs and the warring factions in Lebanon into a common front against Israel.

The Israeli press is reflecting growing public concern about the implications of the Lebanese problem for Israel. An editorial in Israel's most prestigious daily asserts that events in Lebanon have weakened Israel's strategic position for the long run.

The Syrian troops that moved into the ports of Tyre and Sidon presumably are attempting to prevent

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Lebanese leftist forces from getting supplies from Arab states opposed to the Syrian role in Lebanon, and to limit anti-Syrian political demonstrations. 25X1

Anti-Syrian demonstrations have occurred in Sidon and the northern city of Tripoli. 25X1

Syria may be preparing to send more forces toward Lebanon. Yesterday, the US defense attache in Syria observed 40 to 50 tank transporters near a garrison of Syria's 1st Armored Division at Al Kiswah, about 10 miles south of Damascus. He believes any additional Syrian forces sent to Lebanon would come from this division.

* * *

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USSR: *The Soviet navy apparently has met Egypt's deadline of today for evacuating the port of Alexandria. The last Soviet ship left the port last night.*

The Soviets apparently would have preferred more time in which to carry out the evacuation.

Moscow is trying to make alternative arrangements for supporting naval units in the Mediterranean. Some high-ranking Soviets probably were aboard a VIP-associated naval

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transport that flew into Damascus earlier this week. Presumably they went to Syria to discuss use of the port at Tartus. Several of the Soviet ships removed from Alexandria in the past few weeks have gone there.

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Without additional port facilities, the Soviet navy is limited to increasing its use of international anchorages. A buoy tender--a ship that emplaces and services mooring buoys--has been shifted from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. The Soviets already have mooring buoys at anchorages south of Cyprus and north of Tobruk, Libya.

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JORDAN:

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